

CRUCIAL WEEK AHEAD

WYCOMBE Wanderers face a crucial two matches in three days this week when they travel to Walton and Hersham tonight (Tuesday) and then visit Walthamstow Avenue on Thursday.

With the Rothmans Isthmian League Division One race thrown wide open again after Enfield's home defeat by Leatherhead on Saturday, Wanderers must gain maximum points from these two games.

For once, they will not have to fear the trip to Walton — so often a difficult game in the past. Gone are the days of Connell, Somers and company and Walton's fortunes have correspondingly slipped. Earlier this season the

club held a couple of emergency meetings in a bid to rally support but this has done little to help their position in the table.

At present they are second from bottom, seven points adrift of Clapton and eight behind Woking. Their all-important game against Woking on Saturday ended in a 4-1 defeat on their own ground. If they are to stand any chance of Division One survival, they must beat Wycombe tonight.

The two teams last met in September when Wanderers won a poor game by the only goal scored by Tony Horseman. The goal resulted from an error by former Blues goalkeeper Kevin Raine, who like many others, has since left Stompond Lane. In fact only one player, Baker, is still in

the team that played at Loakes Park.

Manager John Martin brought with him several new players when he took over this year but it looks as though his task of keeping the club in the first division will prove too difficult. Even so, Wycombe will be advised not to treat this game as a formality despite the fact that three points look assured.

The Blues will undoubtedly face a more difficult task at Green Pond Lane on the Thursday. This match, originally scheduled for Friday, is being played earlier in the week because of the F.A. Challenge Trophy Final at Wembley on Saturday.

Walthamstow's ground is notoriously bad for absorbing rain

and several of their matches have had to be postponed due to the above-average rainfall this season. At the time of writing the game is on but only a little rain is needed to put the match in jeopardy. If in doubt supporters should ring the club on 01-527 1130 or 01-527 2795.

The earlier game between these two sides proved quite a struggle for the Blues, who won 1-0 thanks to a traditional goal by Dylan Evans. Last year Dylan hit all four goals in Wycombe's game at Walthamstow and it was almost inevitable he would score when the teams met at Loakes Park.

Since that game Walthamstow have lost one of their best players, top goalscorer Chester Brown,

who has turned professional with Ilford. The rest of the side are still there but under a new manager.

Peter Carey was sacked recently and Gordon Sedgley took his place. Sedgley, a player with Enfield and former Harlow boss, decided to give the existing players a good run before making changes.

Avenue's team will not be announced until after their match against Dagenham in the London Charity Cup tonight (Tuesday).

Wanderers may have Paul Birdseye back in their side after a lengthy knee injury sustained at Ilford last month. Paul is back in training and could come in for Dave Alexander in one of the matches this week.

Gap cut to seven points

WITH under a month to go before the end of the season, Enfield are currently leading the Rothmans Isthmian League table with 85 points. Wycombe have 78 and Dagenham 76.

The gap of seven points between the top two could be reduced to four if the Blues win the game in hand. It would then be left for Wycombe to beat Enfield at Loakes Park on Thursday, May 8 to cut the gap again to just one point. After that, they must rely on Enfield dropping further points while Wanderers themselves, of course, must take maximum points from their games.

Enfield's remaining fixtures are: Slough and Dagenham home, Hitchin, Oxford, Sutton, and Wycombe away.

Dagenham must visit Barking, Leatherhead, Wycombe, Tooting and Enfield and meet Leatherhead, Oxford and Hitchin at home.

ROTHMANS ISTHMIAN LEAGUE Division One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	36	27	4	5	69	21	85
Wycombe Wanderers	35	23	9	3	74	29	78
Dagenham	34	24	4	6	77	33	76
Ilford	37	20	9	8	87	45	69
Tooting and Mitcham	36	20	8	8	54	40	68
Leatherhead	35	20	7	8	72	35	67
Dulwich Hamlet	35	19	8	8	60	35	66
Slough Town	37	17	5	15	65	45	56
Oxford City	38	16	8	14	57	47	56
Sutton United	38	15	6	17	60	58	51
Bishop's Stortford	37	15	5	17	50	55	50
Walthamstow Avenue	38	13	8	17	52	53	47
Hitchin Town	35	13	7	15	46	57	46
Hendon	38	13	7	18	52	65	46
Leytonstone	40	12	7	21	41	58	43
Kingstonian	39	13	4	22	43	63	43
Barking	35	11	7	17	51	65	40
Hayes	39	9	12	18	60	64	39
Woking	37	10	8	19	64	66	38
Clapton	39	11	4	24	45	85	37
Walton and Hersham	38	9	3	26	35	79	30
Bromley	38	6	2	30	24	97	20